

August 4, 2005

## **Item E-10: Lake Sammamish State Park Wetlands, Streams, and Shoreline Restoration Plan—Report**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** This item reports to the Commission on development of a wetlands, streams, and shoreline restoration plan for Lake Sammamish State Park. This complies with the Centennial 2013 Plan element, “Our Commitment – Stewardship.”

### **SIGNIFICANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

#### Park Planning Background

Lake Sammamish State Park has undergone an extensive series of planning stages during the past three biennia. December 2001 marked the end of a 16-month public process to classify lands, develop a long-term boundary, and prepare a park management plan under the agency’s Classification and Management Planning (CAMP) Project. In August 2003, staff initiated a second major planning effort to prepare a facilities development plan for the park. Late 2003, in response to local government officials and the public, staff stepped back from rapid, development-oriented planning and outlined a more deliberate process towards a comprehensive vision for park renewal. Approved by the Commission in December 2003, the *roadmap to a shared vision*, evolved to include five key elements:

1. Establish a park advisory committee to enhance public participation.
2. Conduct a design competition to expand upon proposed development concepts and gauge public support.
3. Develop a narrative vision for the park with specific facilities to include in the park master development planning.
4. Demonstrate that the park—as envisioned—will be consistent with the agency’s Centennial 2013 Vision.
5. Prepare a park wetlands, streams, and shoreline restoration plan to ensure resource restoration is considered on a par with development of park facilities.

By December 2004, staff had established and worked with the Commission-directed advisory committee for over a year to successfully complete a design competition; identified facilities to consider during park master development planning; developed a narrative vision; and recommended that the park, as envisioned, was consistent with the agency’s Centennial 2013 Vision. At its January 13, 2005, meeting the Commission adopted staff and the committee’s recommendations with minor modification. Work on restoration planning had begun, but wasn’t scheduled to be complete until summer 2005.

### Wetlands, Streams, and Shoreline Restoration Plan

Lake Sammamish State Park includes a 320-acre system of wetlands and stretches of three salmon bearing streams. Responding to a request by the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust (Greenway Trust), the Commission directed staff to prepare a wetland and riparian area restoration plan (now titled Wetlands, Streams, and Shoreline Restoration Plan) to ensure stewardship of these important park resources. The overarching purpose of the plan was to holistically assess the park's natural features and functions and develop a *menu* of restoration projects that together will form a framework for comprehensive restoration of the park's natural resources. Practically, this plan is intended to detail opportunities and guide a range of restoration work including uncomplicated volunteer projects, professional restoration work funded by grants/contributions, and large-scale restoration projects completed as compensatory mitigation for development both inside and outside the park.

### Restoration Team

With financial contributions and extensive cooperation by the city of Issaquah and the Greenway Trust, staff secured a matching Wetland Protection Grant from the Environmental Protection Agency in the spring 2004 for restoration planning. Technical staff from the three cooperating organizations and a natural resource representative from the Lake Sammamish Advisory Committee formed a restoration team to coordinate planning activities. The team's principal tasks were to agree to a project scope, select an environmental consultant, participate in planning, and coordinate interagency and public review. The city of Issaquah Rivers and Streams Board also volunteered its time to provide preliminary review of the draft plan.

### Planning Process

In March 2005, the restoration team selected The Watershed Company, a Kirkland, Washington environmental consultant to develop the wetlands, streams, and shoreline restoration plan. The consultant completed extensive site analyses and worked with the restoration team to prepare a draft plan for public review and comment. Staff posted the draft plan on the agency's website on July 1, 2005, and held a workshop on July 12, 2005, to hear public comment. All comments related to the draft plan have been provided to the Commission. Following this report, the consultant will prepare a finalized plan incorporating all input by September 2005.

### Current Restoration Activities

Restoration planning has yielded immediate benefits. Drawing out an "early action item" from the restoration plan, staff of the Greenway Trust recently secured a \$50,000 WaterWorks *challenge* grant from King County for restoration of approximately 3 acres of land and an 800 ft. segment of Issaquah Creek – all within the park. The grant requires an additional cash contribution of \$25,000. The Greenway Trust successfully solicited generous contributions from several organizations willing to rise to the challenge. These include:

- City of Issaquah -- \$12,500
- State Parks Foundation -- \$2,500
- State Parks -- Amount Pending
- Individual Donor -- \$1,000

Staff will update the Commission on progress towards the \$25,000 goal.

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION:**

1. Appendix 1: Commission-Adopted Lake Sammamish State Park Vision

2. Appendix 2: Draft Lake Sammamish Wetlands, Streams, and Shoreline Restoration Plan  
<ftp://ftp.parks.wa.gov/LakeSammamish/RestorationPlan>

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**Reviewer(s)**

**SEPA Review:** Environmental staff has determined that the above Commission agenda item is a report and therefore does not require SEPA review.

**Larry Fairleigh, Parks Development Service Center Assistant Director**

**Judy Johnson, Acting Deputy Director** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved for Transmittal to Commission**

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**Rex Derr, Director**

## APPENDIX 1

### Commission-Adopted Lake Sammamish State Park Vision

#### *Lake Sammamish State Park Vision*

Create a park for the 21<sup>st</sup> century that will be an innovative model for the State's diverse system of recreational, cultural, historical and natural sites. Lake Sammamish State Park will be Washington's signature park for protecting and celebrating urban natural areas, showcasing regionally significant wetlands and wildlife habitat, while enriching the lives of visitors and providing a valued legacy to future generations.

#### *Lake Sammamish State Park Goals*

By 2013, Lake Sammamish State Park will be a premier destination, a natural jewel, providing outstanding educational and recreational experiences. Specific goals that further this vision include:

*Valued Legacy:* Lake Sammamish will draw a large clientele of individuals, families and groups by creating a park that models and demonstrates sustainability and natural area restoration.

*Recreation:* The Park will provide a wide diversity of recreational experiences ranging from quiet and contemplative to highly-interactive and organized.

*Education:* Park development and operation will have passive and organized active learning components focused on the theme of preserving wildlife and the natural state of the land by reducing human impacts, celebrating the park's history, and restoring areas that have been degraded.

*Access:* The park will welcome and be accessible to people of all means to enjoy, enrich, and celebrate their lives.

*Economics:* Park development and operation will create a dependable income stream including earned revenue, outside grant funding, and private donations that contribute to the park's vision.

*Restoration/Stewardship:* Natural areas, restored and enhanced to their optimal state, will interweave with developed areas to create passive and active opportunities for learning and enjoyment. The park will benefit from community partnerships to help protect and enhance its natural areas and wildlife habitat.

*Sustainability:* Park development and operation will foster an exemplary architectural and landscape legacy, demonstrating leading edge sustainable design and deep respect for the natural environment.

*Community:* The park will enhance the quality of life for regional visitors and park neighbors, providing high-quality recreation opportunities and natural areas while exceeding local and regional planning goals and regulations.

#### Major Facility Components

The Lake Sammamish State Park Advisory Committee recommends the Commission authorize staff to proceed with master development planning and associated environmental review for Lake Sammamish State Park. Recommended major facility components to incorporate in this process include:

- Urban RV Campground with meeting hall and ancillary support facilities
- Sunset Beach Boardwalk/Bathhouse
- Waterfront Activity Center – Café/Concession\*
- Waterfront Activity Center – Rowing and Kayaking Boathouse
- Rustic Retreat and Group Camping Area\*
- Large-Scale Picnic Area Rentals
- Indoor Multipurpose and Soccer Arena
- Regional Trailhead\*\*
- Interpretive Facilities\*\*
- Fishing Pier\*\*

Major facility components considered but not recommended include:

- Indoor Water Park
- Boating Center (dry rack boat storage)
- Waterfront Activity Center – Restaurant and Family Center
- Large-Scale Playgrounds\*\*
- Outdoor Performance Space\*\*
- Off-Leash Dog Area\*\*
- Climbing Wall\*\*
- Skate Park\*\*

\*Facility reduced in scale from original proposal

\*\*Facility not expected to generate revenue in excess of capitalization and operation costs